

## OWASA invests \$10 million to save energy, enhance water quality and enhance odor control at the Mason Farm Wastewater Treatment Plant

This winter, a contractor will begin work on **\$10 million** of improvements at our Mason Farm Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) near Finley Golf Course in southeast Chapel Hill. The project will:

- Reduce electricity use at the plant by about **20%** through use of more efficient equipment for biological treatment. The energy efficiencies are conservatively expected to save about **\$125,000** annually.
- Help meet pending State standards further limiting nitrogen levels in treated wastewater.
- Enhance odor control at the plant. Ten of the sixteen biological treatment tanks at the WWTP will be covered, and foul air from the tanks will go through carbon filters to remove odor. The odor control improvements are the latest phase of work based on our goal of eliminating off-site odor from the WWTP. Operating costs of the odor control improvements will offset some of the energy savings noted above.



*"This is one of our largest capital investment projects, and it will bring multiple benefits in future decades in terms of cost and greenhouse gas reductions, excellent quality of the treated water that we recycle at Morgan Creek, and being a good neighbor,"* said **John Kiviniemi**, our Wastewater Treatment and Biosolids Recycling Manager (at left in the photo above with **Todd Norman**, Operations Supervisor).

## You may notice chlorine taste and odor in our water in March and early April due to annual change in disinfection

In March, we will use chlorine instead of chloramines to disinfect our drinking water.

Chloramines are a compound of chlorine and ammonia which OWASA has used since 2002 for disinfection in months other than March. Disinfection with chloramines has improved the overall quality of our water and its taste and odor. However, the State requires us to use only chlorine for disinfection one month per year to ensure a high level of disinfection in our water system.

To remove chlorine from our water, you can:

- Filter the water with activated carbon. Water pitchers with activated carbon filters are sold locally.
- Let water sit for a day or so. (We suggest keeping the water in an open container stored in a refrigerator.)
- Boil the water for one minute to evaporate the chlorine.
- Add a few lemon slices to a pitcher of water. The lemon has ascorbic acid, which neutralizes the chlorine. *(continued on back)*

### CONTACT US

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customerservice@owasa.org

**Office Hours:**  
8 AM to 5 PM, Mon-Fri

**Emergencies and Main Office phone:**  
919.968.4421  
[www.owasa.org](http://www.owasa.org)

## You may notice chlorine...(continued from cover)

OWASA crews will release water from various fire hydrants on March 1st. The purpose of this “flushing” of water pipes is to ensure that water with chlorine goes through the entire water system.

The flushing of water mains may cause some discoloration of our water because non-toxic sediment in our water pipes may be stirred up. To clear up the water, please run cold water through a bathtub faucet, etc. for 5 to 10 minutes. If the discoloration does not clear up, please contact us at **919.968.4421**.

## Stephen Dear, Michael Hughes appointed to OWASA Board

**Stephen Dear** took the oath of office as a member of the OWASA Board in July, 2012 as a Carrboro appointee.

Mr. Dear has been the Executive Director of People of Faith Against the Death Penalty, a national organization based in Carrboro, since August, 1997. From 1990 to 1995, he was the Executive Director of the NC Rural Communities Assistance Project, which provides technical assistance and organizing services to small communities across North Carolina on water and wastewater issues.

Stephen has also worked as a writer, served in the Peace Corps and interned in Ralph Nader's office at the Center for the Study of Responsive Law. He received a Bachelor's degree in political science in 1985 from the University of Richmond, and a Master's degree in international studies from Claremont (California) Graduate University in 1989.

**Michael Hughes, P.E.**, began serving on the OWASA Board in August, 2012 as an Orange County appointee.

Michael is employed as Assistant Engineering Manager with the City of Durham. Mr. Hughes has served as the Design Group Supervisor with the Durham Public Works Department; the Managing Partner for his engineering and land surveying firm; Senior Project Manager for two large engineering firms; and as officer, director and shareholder in land development companies. He has successfully managed complex projects and budgets and a staff of as many as 25 personnel as well as subconsultants.

He has bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering. Mr. Hughes has lived in Orange County since 1989.

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## Go Green! (paperless)

To choose paperless billing, please go to our website, **www.owasa.org**, click on MANAGE MY ACCOUNT, register (if you have not already) or sign-in, and select E-Billing under the **Preferences** tab.

The first time you visit **Manage My Account**, you will need to register with your 6-digit customer number, which is printed on OWASA bills.

Each month, you will receive an e-mail notice from **owasa@owasa.org** that your bill is ready to view on our website. (You may need to adjust your spam filter to receive electronic bill notices from **owasa@owasa.org**.)

Please call OWASA Customer Service at **919.537.4343** or send an e-mail to **customerservice@owasa.org** if you have any questions or need help.

Our on-line account information includes:

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- the due date for the next payment,
- current and past bills viewable in the format of our paper bills,
- water/sewer use and billing history,
- e-mail confirmation of payments and
- bills for OWASA service at past addresses.

## OWASA begins use of Twitter



OWASA has begun to use the social medium Twitter as an additional way to provide information to citizens. To follow OWASA, click on the Twitter logo at the bottom right of our homepage, **www.owasa.org**.

### Español

Este boletín informativo contiene información sobre los servicios de agua y alcantarillado de **OWASA**. Para obtener una traducción, por favor llame al **919.537.4221** o mande un correo electrónico a: **info@owasa.org**. ¡Muchas gracias!